

# Net Neutrality

Christian Dossett

Com 1101

Wallace

November 17th, 2016

# Net Neutrality

## Research Outline

THESIS: The European Union should pass jurisdiction similar to that of the FCC and rule the internet as a utility.

- I. Net neutrality allows a platform for social justice
  - A. Minorities are spared further suppression and are assured democracy
  - B. Choice of web services will diminish because of monopolization
- II. Internet users will pay in absence of net neutrality
  - A. Telecom companies will hike rates for use of higher bandwidth websites.
  - B. Online freedom will catalyze change much faster than a throttled internet will
- III. Net neutrality discourages monopolies
  - A. Open internet forbids fast lanes to those who can afford them
  - B. Open web waives the possibility of internet service providers pairing up with moguls
- IV. Net neutrality aids small business/entrepreneurs
  - A. Comparative advantage will prevail on an equally accessible internet platform
  - B. Start ups are spared the ramifications of paid prioritization

Imagine if the internet was to become a much smaller place, where bigger-than-life companies charged you outrageous sums of money for your own attention and in addition, dwarfed any small companies who even wished to compete for your glance. Thanks to Net Neutrality, the internet is what we know it as today...a beautiful place full of equal opportunity and hidden gems wherein people from every corner of the Earth can voice and support themselves on a purely democratic platform. What is net neutrality? Net neutrality has long been an unspoken rule of the internet, wherein Internet Service Providers (ISPs) such as Comcast or Verizon hand over the same quality of internet use to it's customers, regardless of the website or data vacuum in use. As the use of internet data has risen on an exponential curve since 2012, net neutrality has become a hot-button topic in the world of law and telecommunication (Internet). To better understand the issue, imagine there's only one source of water in a town. Let us also imagine that the watering hole has the capability to filter the water for no additional cost to itself, however, the town water provider only filters little over half of the water it wells and sells the cleaner water to affluent restaurant owners only. The town water provider and the affluent restaurant owners reap the green-backed benefits the "luxurious amenity" provided first to the restaurant, then to the customers. The customers and quainter businesses get the short end of the stick when they are left with less viable options and lack room to grow as they have been isolated by a discriminatory provider. Let the water be internet data and the restaurants be everyday websites. In the United States, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled the internet similarly to how states rule water, and electricity, and gas...as a utility (Genachowski). The internet has quickly become a lynch pin to a new world standard of living. To allow ISPs reign over creating fast-lanes, blocking, and throttling data usage is criminal. As the European

Union nears its decision on open internet, the EU should pass jurisdiction similar to that of the FCC and rule the internet as a utility.

A reason that everyone on and off the internet should care about net neutrality: it allows a platform for social justice. **Online freedom will catalyze change much faster than a throttled internet will.** In an authoritarian country like North Korea, citizens are granted access to approximately 28 websites, which are for consuming, not broadcasting (Asher). Blocking web access like in North Korea not only represses freedom of speech, it cheats users of what might be the internet's greatest gift: a proper world-view. Open access to the internet allows any human being to assess possibilities and plan an appropriate course of action to fulfilling their dreams. Historically popular hashtag movements like #kony2012 and #blacklivesmatter are great examples of a calls for change that have gone viral. Trending topics find stagnant issues and begin the ball rolling for change. **Furthermore, minorities are spared further suppression and are assured the democratically received voice that the internet promises.** A properly free internet transforms everybody at the finger-tips; the moment a person's thoughts are translated from their body into their keyboard, those thoughts are pasted into the same text as everyone else. Thoughts online are stripped of their skin color. Thoughts online are stripped of their socio-economic standings. Thoughts online are given exactly as much merit as the author has crafted into them. Unlike the press offered to our predecessors, an online presence requires no publishers to authorize a capable mind's thoughts or a passionate writer's diction. Co-founder of Apple, Steve Wozniak, believes that like "space and the moon...", the internet should be free (Wozniak).

Affecting everyone who has preferred websites...internet users would pay various ways in absence of net neutrality. **Telecommunication companies would hike rates for use of higher bandwidth websites.** In an online environment that allows a company like Netflix to pay for faster

service than competitors, ISPs would also look to manage the accessibility you have to your favorite websites. Ultimately, choice of web services will diminish because of monopolization of preferred sites in each private ISP sector. Companies like AT&T, Verizon, or Comcast could serve you access to websites that they lobby for-in bundles that may allow for omission of countless sites you might be be able to access otherwise (Ciarlo). The most attractive rate for internet users is a flat rate, where all of the internet is equally accessible, once data flow is paid for. With net neutrality as an absentee, internet-goers would pay in their freedom of choice and of course, right out of their pocket.

In light of too-big-to-fail businesses, net neutrality discourages the growth and emergence of monopolies. Theoretically, ISPs could take money from big online businesses that are willing to pay for “fast lanes”, which could run at higher speeds than the companies’ standard broadband delivery. Existing net neutrality laws forbid fast lanes to those who can afford them. Hypothetically, if fast lanes are obtained by a firm, claiming their market becomes a game of *finders-keepers*. With unparalleled accessibility, the first company hoards internet traffic and sulks in the corrupt limelight it hired to shine on itself. In a 2015 ruling named *Open Internet*, the United States’ FCC mandated:

No Paid Prioritization: broadband providers may not favor some lawful Internet traffic over other lawful traffic in exchange for consideration of any kind—in other words, no "fast lanes." This rule also bans ISPs from prioritizing content and services of their affiliates. (Open)

Bills like Open Internet also waive the likelihood that internet service providers will pair up with data moguls in under-the-table like deals. Actions like these are necessary to prevent telecommunication companies and multimillion dollar companies from holding hands into the

sunset of guaranteed prosperity. And though ISPs protest that they “will be less likely to invest in new and better equipment if they don't have this lucrative new revenue source”, tech experts see that the prosperity of the internet does not look to be in any danger in the near or far future (Net). Even if the largest players aren't given priority, the internet is still expected to expand and innovation is still continued to grow. There is an argument that a world without laws like Open Internet, could hinder innovation. Others believe that competition is healthy and that a world of monopolistic enterprises would breed a class of Orwellian workers who suffer from a bit of existentialism.

Net neutrality isn't all about fighting the big dogs. The root of the Open Internet cause is inversely largely about aiding small business owners and entrepreneurs. Why does equal opportunity for micro and macro businesses matter? Two words: comparative advantage. In business, comparative advantage can be described as the one thing that really sets businesses apart from their competitors. A company's comparative advantage could be a plethora of things...maybe they have a very strict ethical code that they abide by-that some consumers deem all-encompassing when deciding who to back and give their money too. [Comparative advantage prevails on an equally accessible internet platforms](#). If the internet is throttled for certain sites to run more efficiently than less affluent ones, comparative advantage is lost in the buffering circle... spinning round and round until the consumer loses their patience and gives their business over to the company that is able to pay a greater sum for their attention. [As a result of the new United States communication laws, start ups are spared the ramifications of paid prioritization](#). Small business owners can stand confidently, knowing that their creation(s) will be judged fairly and hopefully consumed ravenously in a purely democratic environment. Following the FCC's victorious case against the US Broadband Industry in early 2016, Senator Edward Markey (D-

Mass) heralded net neutrality laws to come, proclaiming that they were “a victory for consumers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and anyone who counts on the Internet to connect to the world” (Brodkin).

The end goal of net neutrality is to end and prevent further corruption of telecommunication companies and spare the internet as billions of fortunate users currently know it. The internet has served in furthering the education of about everyone who’s ever used it. The internet is that infamous hole that American fathers joke about their kids digging to China; except, this hole is sitting on our office desks, cradled in our pockets, and even strapped onto our wrists. Catalogued in Thomas Friedman’s book, *The World is Flat*, Friedman described the internet as one of the “ten great flatteners” that have helped level the earth and once again make it a small world (p. 51). Social revolution, freedom of access, exorcism of corruption, and the backing of privately owned dreams is what proper internet legislation looks like. If the European Union fails to pass a bill similar to that of the FCC’s *Open Internet*, affected countries will be cheated of the global internet’s full potential.

# Works Cited

Asher, Saira. "What the North Korean Internet Really Looks Like." BBC News, 21 Sept.

2016, [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37426725](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37426725).

Brodkin, Jon. "After Net Neutrality Loss, ISPs Get Ready to Take Case to Supreme Court."

Ars Technica, 14 June 2016,

[arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2016/06/supreme-court-get-ready-isps-wont-give-up-net-neutrality-fight/](http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2016/06/supreme-court-get-ready-isps-wont-give-up-net-neutrality-fight/).

Ciarlo, Mike. "A Guide to the Open Internet." The Open Internet: A Case for Net

Neutrality, [www.theopeninter.net/](http://www.theopeninter.net/).

Friedman, Thomas L. The World Is Flat: a Brief History of the Twenty-First Century. New

York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005. p. 51.

Genachowski, Julius. "New Rules for an Open Internet." Federal Communications

Commission, 16 Feb. 2016, [www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2010/12/21/new-rules-open-internet](http://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2010/12/21/new-rules-open-internet).

"Internet Users (per 100 People)." Data,

[data.worldbank.org/indicator/it.net.user.p2?page=6&cid=gpd](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/it.net.user.p2?page=6&cid=gpd) 44.

"Net neutrality." Arkansas Business, 9 Feb. 2015, p. 18. General OneFile, [portal.lib.fit.edu/](http://portal.lib.fit.edu/)

[login?url=http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?](http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?login?url=http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?) Accessed 14 Nov. 2016.

"Open Internet." Federal Communications Commission, 25 Aug. 2016,

[www.fcc.gov/general/open-internet](http://www.fcc.gov/general/open-internet).



Wozniak, Steve. "Steve Wozniak to the FCC: Keep the Internet Free." The Atlantic,  
Atlantic Media Company,  
[www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2010/12/steve-wozniak-to-the-  
fcc-keep-the-internet-free/68294/](http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2010/12/steve-wozniak-to-the-fcc-keep-the-internet-free/68294/).